

Central East Region Update

Below are FMNP classes and other interesting opportunities and events coming up in your area. The inclusion of any non-FMNP event does not necessarily constitute an endorsement by the FMNP or University of Florida IFAS. Please consult the announcements below for contact information to get details about events and FMNP classes. Please DO NOT REPLY to this message. Contact and Unsubscribe links are at the bottom of the newsletter.

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1. Volusia County Coastal Systems Class

March 11-April 15, 2011
Registration closes March 3, 2011
(Course Code: cs11-02)



Facility Information
Volusia County Agricultural Center: Auditorium
3100 East New York Av. DeLand, FL 32724

Instructor Information
David Griffis
Organization: UF/IFAS Volusia County Extension
Phone: 386-822-5578
Fax: 386-822-5767
Email: dgriffis@co.volusia.fl.us

2. Brevard County Coastal Systems Class

April 2 - May 28, 2011
Registration closes March 27, 2011
(Course Code: cs11-06)



Facility Information
Riverwalk: A Family Park: Riverwalk Nature Center
5355 US Highway 1, Rockledge, FL 32955

Instructor Information
Brandon Smith
Organization: Brevard County Parks and Recreation
Phone: 321-433-4490
Email: brandon.smith@brevardparks.com
Assistant Instructor: Cheryl Caldwell - Brevard Zoo, Holy Abeels - UF/IFAS Brevard County Extension

3. Florida Seafood Safety & Sustainability Webinar Series

Florida Seafood Safety & Sustainability 2011 Brown Bag Lunch Webinar Series

The FREE webinar series will educate seafood lovers about the sustainability and safety associated with some of Florida's most commercially valuable seafood products. The series will help consumers make informed decisions about purchasing and eating Florida Seafood. For more information and to sign up, contact Bryan Fluech at Fluech@ufl.edu.

Webinar Schedule
12:15pm - 12:45pm
Feb 16 - Grouper
Mar 16 - Shrimp
May 18 - Snapper
Sept 21 - Spiny Lobster
Nov 16 - Oysters

4. Florida Scrubjay Festival

Florida Scrubjay Festival - Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge Saturday, February 12, 2011 9:30am—3:30pm

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge will host a Florida Scrub Jay Festival from 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, February 12, 2011. This free family event will celebrate the Florida scrub jay, which is a threatened species found only in Florida. In addition, visitors will learn about endangered scrub habitat and the many species of plants and animals that call scrub habitat their home. The festival will offer live music, guided nature walks, presentations, live animal displays, face painting, crafts and activities for children, and environmental exhibits. The festival events will be located at the Refuge's Sandler Education Outpost Pavilion and the Visitor Center.

Please call 321-861-5601 for information.

5. FMNP Grads to Action

Scrub Jay Monitoring in Ocala National Forest

The Northeast Region Scrub-Jay Volunteer Program is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Volunteers will assist with a Scrub-jay survey in the Ocala National Forest (primarily in Marion and Lake Counties).

Scrub-jay Monitoring Volunteers will assist the FWC and USFS with the new survey design for the Ocala National Forest population of Scrub-jays. Volunteers will collect data about family groups of Scrub-jays within the forest and report their findings back to the biologists. Volunteers will follow standardized protocols to collect consistent data. Volunteers will work closely with biologists, but may become more independent as their experience and skill level increases.

Each volunteer will be trained both in a classroom setting and in the field. Trainings will cover the biology, social structure, and habitat requirements of the Scrub-jay, as well as bird identification, banding identification, and data collection. Once trained, the volunteer may work with an agency biologist or independently to conduct monitoring efforts of family units of Scrub-jays and scrub habitat.

For more information about this exciting volunteer opportunity contact Claire Sunquist, FWC Northeast Region Volunteer Coordinator, Clair.Sunquist@MyFWC.com, 352-732-1225.

Bear Aware Canvassing in Marion, Lake, Volusia and Seminole Counties

Bear Aware Canvassing Volunteers will be utilized for canvassing efforts where communities are in need of education to reduce bear conflicts and move towards compliance with rules regarding the intentional/unintentional feeding of bears and proper methods for securing bear attractants. Volunteers will work in small teams with the FWC Volunteer Coordinator to share information with neighborhood associations and individual homeowners in the regions where human-bear conflicts occur. Those targeted efforts will reach people living in many different neighborhoods around central Florida. Canvassing volunteers will travel to these neighborhoods to visit with and educate homeowners, pass out information, and answer questions about bears and bear behavior. Bear Aware Canvassing Volunteers are a critical part of the future of black bears in Florida. Without public awareness and support, human-bear conflicts will continue to increase. By educating homeowners to take action to prevent problems, Bear Aware Canvassing Volunteers help to reduce human-bear conflicts for the well-being of the public and black bears.

For more information about this rewarding volunteer opportunity contact Claire Sunquist, FWC Northeast Region Volunteer Coordinator, Clair.Sunquist@MyFWC.com, 352-732-1225.

Everglades Summer Internship

The internship program, which runs from May 20 to August 5, 2011, is for undergraduate and graduate students with top grades in the environmental sciences. The intensive, 11 week internship is focused on the Florida Everglades and the multi-billion dollar plan to preserve and restore this vital ecosystem. Mentored by top-level professionals and decision-makers, interns are involved in hands-on projects and educational activities. The internship includes a \$2,000 stipend in five \$400 increments.

Application deadline: March 21, 2011
Successful applicants will be notified by April 15, 2011

For more information and an application visit the [Arthur R. Marshall Foundation](http://www.ArthurRMarshallFoundation.org) website.

6. Instructors' Corner

We need your stories!

FMNP Instructors, do you have a great story to tell or tip to share? Beginning in January 2011 we will introduce a new feature, the Instructors' Corner. This is your chance to brag on your students, contribute tips and ideas, share interesting, updated or new scientific information, and learn something that might help you with your classes. We're asking for your help to fill this segment with helpful information and inspiring stories. It's so easy to do, just write a brief story, include pictures or attachments if you like, and send it to us at info@masternaturalist.org.

FMNP Makes a Difference at Matanzas Pass Preserve *Submitted by Joanne Semmer, written by Jim Rodwell*

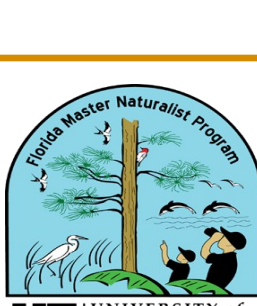
Jim and Dorothy Rodwell moved to Fort Myers Beach in 2003 and discovered the natural beauty of Matanzas Pass Preserve as they live adjacent to it. From that vantage point, they wanted to contribute to keeping that 60 acres available to future generations. It serves as a sample of what much of the beach looked like before the development boom.

Jim describes what happened: "We worked for several years as Friends of Matanzas Pass Preserve in mitigation and restoration efforts. During those activities, Terry Cain, Land Steward for Lee County Parks and Recreation, encouraged us to attend the Florida Master Naturalist Program. So, off to the Coastal Module at Oostego Bay Foundation we went in 2007. After completing that module, we volunteered to meet a need for interpretive walks in the Preserve."

The materials from the FMNP provided the basis of Jim's walk through a mangrove habitat, transition zone, and oak hammock. Dorothy found the ethnobotany materials especially interesting and developed an interpretive walk based on that material (and more) that both entertains and educates. In fact, the pilot of the concept was tested out in Jim's presentation in the Wetland Module at Corkscrew Swamp. It worked out well!

Another program followed called Stress Detox at the Preserve. An exciting new opportunity is to integrate earth education into children's programs that meet scholastic standards, is fun, and highlights the preserve's unique attributes.

Jim became a Florida Master Naturalist in 2009 and Dorothy in 2010. In addition to the FMNP materials the resource base of talented learners has been appreciated and ongoing. (In fact, taking some of the advanced topics sounds like a good plan). Without the FMNP, the Rodwells agree that having the confidence to contribute actively with Lee County would not have happened. In fact, both are now active Lee County Volunteers.



www.MasterNaturalist.org